

Agencies and Organizations Assisting Farmers

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL RESOURCES

28 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333
207-287-3871

"get real. get maine!"

a promotional branding campaign, to increase public awareness of Maine products. **Division of Market and Production Development, 287-3491**

Farmland Protection Program, 287-7520

Ag Business Planning Assistance

- **Farms for the Future**, administered jointly with Coastal Enterprises Inc., provides farmers grants to develop and implement business plans. **Dept. 287-7520** and **287-7620, CEI 772-5356**
- **NxLevel Business Planning**, coordinated by NRCS Heart of Maine Resource Conservation and Development Council, 368-4433
- **Food and Farms Resource Guide**—*Handbook for Maine Agricultural Businesses* provides farmers information on various agricultural subjects and programs, **287-3491**

Ag Business Loans and Grants

- Agricultural Marketing Loan Fund
- Potato Marketing Improvement Fund
- Agricultural Development Grant
- Agricultural Technical Assistance Grant Program
- Agricultural Water Source Development Cost Share Program

MAINE FARM BUREAU

A non-governmental, voluntary organization whose mission it is to analyze economic and public problems surrounding agriculture in Maine. Augusta, **622-4111**

MAINE FARM CREDIT

Specializes in lending to Maine's agricultural, fishing and forest products industries. Aroostook Regional Office, Presque Isle, **764-6431**; or Southern Regional Office, Auburn, **784-0193**

MAINE FARMLAND TRUST

A membership-based, non-profit organization working in the public's interest to protect Maine's precious farmland resources. Bucksport, **469-6465**

MAINE FARMLINK

A farm transfer program that connects farmers seeking farmland with retiring Maine farmers and farm owners who wish to see their agricultural lands remain active. Currently there are 35 prospective sellers and 67 prospective buyers statewide with 18 prospects in Androscoggin County. Freedom, **382-3255**

MAINE ORGANIC FARMERS AND GARDENERS ASSOCIATION (MOFGA)

Developed from a loose affiliation of farmers and gardeners committed to growing healthy, chemical free food, to an internationally recognized advocate for food production that enhances and protects the ecological as well as economic vitality of rural communities. Unity, **568-4142**

MAINE WOMEN'S AGRICULTURAL NETWORK

A collaborative effort of farmers, agriculture and related non-profit, for profit and governmental agencies seeking to help women and other underserved individuals find the skills necessary to begin or continue farming profitably. Lisbon Falls, **800-287-1458**

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Assists farmers, landowners and communities with conserving and protecting natural resources. Each District works in partnership with the **USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), USDA Farm**

Service Agency and other federal, state and local agencies, including the **NRCS—Resource Conservation and Development Council**. Lewiston, **753-9400**

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

A major educational outreach program of the University of Maine, with offices statewide. Androscoggin/Sagadahoc Counties Office: Lisbon Falls, **800-287-1458** or statewide **800-287-0274**

Web Links

United States Department of Agriculture
www.usda.gov

USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
www.nrcs.usda.gov

Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources
www.maine.gov/argiculture/

"get real. get maine!"
www.getrealmaine.com

Maine State Web Portal
www.maine.gov

Maine Food and Farms Resource Guide
www.getrealmaine.com/connect/

References

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
USDA Farm Service Agency
Maine Revenue Service

Androscoggin County

2003-2004 COUNTY PROFILE OF MAINE AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES

Maine's agricultural future is inextricably linked to its ability to continue to build strong, long-lasting connections between farmers and the communities they serve. To help all citizens better understand how agriculture is connected to every aspect of life in Maine, this county profile provides citizens, community planners and natural resource conservation groups important facts about farmers, farms, farmland and agricultural enterprises in Androscoggin County.

Farmers in Androscoggin County



| | 1974 | 1978 | 1982 | 1992 | 1997 |
|---------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Farming as Principal Occupation | 221 | 210 | 195 | 177 | 150 |
| Male Operators (N) | NA | 332 | 335 | 275 | 261 |
| Female Operators (N) | NA | 13 | 20 | 27 | 27 |
| Average Age | 52 | 50 | 51 | 56 | 56 |

*USDA/Dept. of Commerce, Agriculture Census 1974-1997

Statewide, farming has a unique connection to the history of Maine. Farmers are stewards of the land; well-managed farmland protects natural resources and creates beautiful open space. Many of Maine's first settlers were farmers whose fields, farmhouses and barns shaped Maine's historic landscape. Today, Maine's agricultural producers and processors annually contribute over 1.2 billion dollars to Maine's economy and employ 65,000 Maine people!

Androscoggin County Farmland

| | 1974 | 1978 | 1982 | 1992 | 1997 |
|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Number of Farms | 342 | 345 | 355 | 302 | 288 |
| Total Acres | 68,495 | 71,637 | 74,219 | 62,242 | 55,905 |
| Average Farm Size(A) | 200 | 208 | 209 | 206 | 194 |
| Total Cropland (A) | 27,550 | 29,523 | 33,728 | 25,378 | 23,368 |
| Total Pasture (A) | NA | 13,416 | 16,074 | 9,253 | 7,163 |
| Total Orchard (A) | 1,384 | 1,729 | 1,936 | 1,478 | 1,492 |
| Total Hay (A) | 15,068 | 16,266 | 15,525 | 14,949 | 13,759 |
| Total Woodland (A) | 32,746 | 34,185 | 34,065 | 31,436 | 25,192 |

*USDA/Dept. of Commerce, Agriculture Census 1974-1997

Land in farms decreased 10 percent percent from 62,242 acres in 1992 to 55,905 acres in 1997.

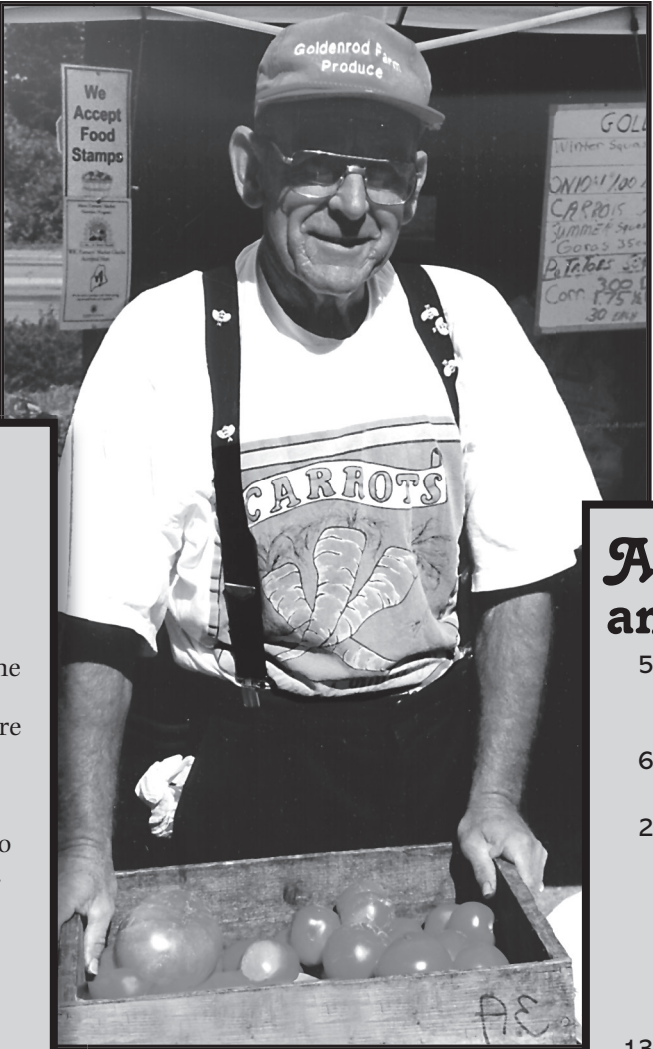
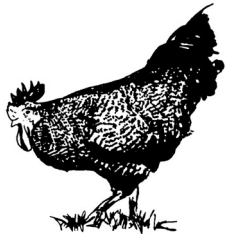


November
2003



Unique to Androscoggin County

- There are 11 granges in Androscoggin County. **County Grange**, Steven Verrill, Master, 998-2301
- County Chapter **Maine Farm Bureau**, President Bob Leavitt, Turner, 224-8256
- **Farm Fresh Connections**, a new program of the Maine Sustainable Agriculture Society, is linking the food service programs of Bates and Bowdoin Colleges with farmers in the area.
- **Land Trust Organizations**
Androscoggin Land Trust, formed in 1991 with the primary mission to preserve significant lands in the county, 782-2302
- The **State Historic Preservation Office** (287-2132) and **Maine Preservation** (775-7737) have information regarding the county's agriculturally related places of historic and cultural significance.



Food, Farms* and Fairs in Androscoggin County

- 45 Farmstands/Greenhouses/Nurseries open to the public
- 2 Farmers' Markets serving multiple communities
- 4 Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Farms contract directly with their customers who pay a fixed price in advance for fresh produce throughout the season
- 15 Farms offer Pick Your Own fruits and vegetables
- 17 Farms host on farm events and activities, such as pumpkin hunts, animal viewing, hayrides and school programs

** Some farms may be counted in multiple categories. Not all farm activities and retail services are listed here.*

Prime Soils in Androscoggin County

PRIME FARMLAND

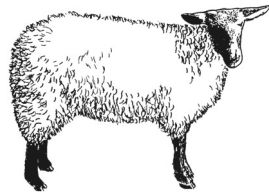
The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines prime farmland as the land that is best suited to producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce a sustained high yield of crops while using acceptable farming methods. Prime Farmland produces the highest yields and requires minimal amounts of energy and economic resources, and farming it results in the least damage to the environment. Prime Farmland is a limited strategic resource. No more of it is being created.

34,378 acres (estimated)

SOILS OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE

This is land, in addition to prime and unique farmlands, that is of statewide significance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. Criteria for defining and delineating this land are to be determined by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Generally, additional farmlands of statewide importance include those that are nearly prime farmland and that economically produce a high yield as prime farmlands if conditions are favorable.

60,157 acres (estimated)



Farmland Protected in Androscoggin County

PERMANENTLY PROTECTED

- 311 acres (two farms) have been protected through the Land for Maine's Future Program and USDA Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program

TEMPORARILY PROTECTED

Maine Dept. of Agriculture

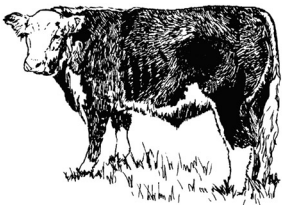
- 400 acres protected through Farms for the Future Program (5 years)

Enrolled in Farm and Open Space Tax Program

- 7,865 acres farmland in 2002 — 4,547 acres cropland plus 3,318 acres woodland
- 589 acres open space in 2001

Enrolled in Tree Growth Tax Program

- 33,431 acres in 2001



Annual Statewide Events and Programs in 2003

- 5 Androscoggin County farms opened their sugarhouses for Maine Maple Sunday, held annually on the 4th Sunday in March.
 - 6 Androscoggin County farms welcomed the public on Open Farm Day, held on the 4th Sunday in July.
 - 2 Androscoggin County restaurants participated in Maine Menus Month in October, making special efforts to feature Maine grown, raised or harvested ingredients on their menus.
- Many farmers participated in Great Maine Apple Day at Highmoor Farm in early November to celebrate Maine's apple harvest.

- 13 Androscoggin County farmers and 893 seniors participated in Maine Senior FarmShare, a program funded by the USDA, that provides locally grown produce to low-income seniors. Statewide, 185 farmers benefited from nearly \$900,000 in sales and additional seniors received fresh produce through food pantries and community meal sites.



Androscoggin County Agricultural Sales

Statewide market research in 2002 showed 89 percent surveyed believe that buying locally grown food strengthens Maine's economy.

| | 1974 | 1978 | 1982 | 1992 | 1997 |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| All crops | \$2,617,000 | \$3,903,000 | \$6,814,000 | \$7,359,000 | \$7,893,000 |
| Livestock/poultry and their products | \$53,420,000 | \$72,843,000 | \$73,141,000 | \$73,657,000 | \$54,484,000 |
| Nursery and greenhouse products | \$403,000 | \$467,000 | \$503,000 | \$1,079,000 | \$1,014,000 |
| Fruits, nuts and berries | NA | \$2,962,000 | \$4,671,000 | \$4,592,000 | \$5,000,000 |

**USDA/Dept. of Commerce, Agriculture Census 1974-1997*